

Message Text

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TAGS: PFOR, CI

SUBJ: CHILEAN VIEW OF RED TIDE

REF: SANTIAGO 2089

1. SUMMARY: CONSERVATIVE NEWSPAPER "EL MERCURIO", MOST PRESTIGIOUS OF CHILE, CONTINUES AND EXTENDS EDITORIAL COMMENTARY SUPPORTING LINE SET BY GOC SPOKESMEN ON DETERIORATING POSITION OF US IN STRUGGLE AGAINST IMPERIALISTIC ADVANCE OF USSR 9 (REFTEL). END SUMMARY

2. IN EDITORIAL APRIL 13 MERCURIO NOTED THAT UP TO NOW CHILE HAS ATTRIBUTED "VIOLENT" FOREIGN REACTION AGAINST IT TO COMMUNIST PROPAGANDA AND ITS SUCCESS IN "FOOLING UNWARY MINDS". BUT COURSE OF EVENTS (I.E. VIETNAM, CAMBODIA, PORTUGAL, ETC.) INDICATES ATTACK ON CHILE COMES AT MERIDIAN OF SOVIET POWER AND "GRAVE POLITICAL DECLINE" OF US. THIS EXPLAINS "COWARDLY ATTITUDE OF COMPROMISED ITALY", CYNICAL GESTURE OF MEXICO", AND "ANTIPATHY OF CERTAIN WEAK SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENTS OF EUROPE". CHILEAN ARMED FORCES HAVE CHALLENGED THE EMERGING IMPERIAL POWER. CHILEAN MISTAKE, HOWEVER, MERCURIO SAYS, IS TO EXPECT THAT ANTI-CHILEAN PROPAGANDA WILL FADE WITH TIME, AND TO CONCERN ITSELF OBSESSIVELY WITH "IMAGE" OF CHILE. WHILE
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WORLD IGNORES ATROCITIES OF COMMUNISM, "THE EMERGING

IMPERIAL POWER IMPOSES ITS VALUES AND NORMS OF CONDUCT.
THE PHENOMENON OF SHIFT IN WORLD POWER IS MORE CLEARLY
SEEN EACH DAY".

3. IN SET OF EDITORIALS APRIL 14, MERCURIO WARNS THAT
RESPONSIBILITY FOR "BLOODBATH WHICH MAY OCCUR IN VIETNAM"
WILL FALL ON CONGRESS IF IT REFUSES PRESIDENT FORD'S
CALL FOR AID. INITIATIVE OF PRESIDENT IS PRAISED, AND
IF GVN FALLS, "AVERAGE AMERICAN MUST FEEL RESPONSIBLE FOR
WHATEVER BEFALLS THOSE WHO WERE THEIR ALLIES". MERCURIO
STATES THAT ENTIRE FOREIGN POLICY OF U.S. IS AT STAKE.
AMERICAN DIPLOMACY WILL AGAIN BECOME CREDIBLE IF "HARMONY"
IS RESOTRED BETWEEN CONGRESS AND WHITE HOUSE.

4. COMMENT: MERCURIO AND OTHER PAPERS REFLECT GOC
POSTURE OF "WE TOLD YOU SO" IN FACE OF APPARENT DISASTER
BROUGHT ON, AS THEY SEE IT, BY WEAKNESS AND DETENTE
POLICIES OF U.S. AND ALLIES; THUS APPROPRIATENESS
OF TOUGH GOC STAND. MERCURIO ITSELF HAS OFTEN PRESSED FOR
JRE AND BETTER CONCENTRATED GOC EFFORT TO COUNTER
"MARXIST" PROPAGANDA AGAINST CHILE. CURRENT EDITORIALS
HOWEVER (AND MERCURIO EDITORIALS ARE NOT ALWAYS CONSISTENT),
LEAD TO CONCLUSION IT IS HARDLY WORTHWHILE FOR GOC TO
MAKE THIS BIGGER EFFORT: PROBLEM IS SHIFT IN WORLD
BALANCE OF POWER, A BRUTAL FACT THAT CANNOT BE COUNTERED
BY PROPAGANDA.

5. ALTHOUGH THERE IS NO HINT OF IT IN THESE EDITORIALS,
THEY MAY ALSO REPRESENT FEAR THAT ANTI-CHILE CAMPAIGN
COULD BE SUCCESSFUL ENOUGH IN NEW ATMOSPHERE OF SUCCESS
OF "WORLD COMMUNISM" TO PROMPT ATTACK FROM OLD ENEMY, PERU,
WHICH IN PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES CHILE WOULD FACE ALONE.
(TO CHILEANS,
LOGIC OF SITUATION WOULD SUGGEST THAT A
U.S. BESET BY TROUBLES ELSEWHERE AND UNSYMPATHETIC TO
AUTHORITARIAN CHILEAN REGIME COULD NOT BE COUNTED ON IN
SUCH A CONTINGENCY.) IN THIS CONNECT IT IS NOTEWORTHY
THAT ANOTHER RECENT EDITORIAL IN MERCURIO, COMMENTING
TARTLY ON PERU'S ECONOMIC TROUBLES, EVOKED A QUICK DISCLAIMER
FROM FONOFF, WHICH DISSOCIATED ITSELF THOROUGHLY FORM
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THE PIECE.
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